

NOTICE

This manual normally contains pictures, but the pictures are temporarily unavailable.

SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT

SEARCH & HANDCUFF MANUAL



RM 523.02



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REVISED: 09-95

TO: ALL PERSONNEL

General Order 523.02 implements this manual and requires personnel know its contents and follow its guidelines when performing searches and handcuffing suspects. This manual is for Departmental use only and does not apply to the standard of care, in an evidentiary sense, in criminal or civil proceedings. The instructions, guidelines, and policies contained in this manual are not intended to nor should they be construed as a creation of a legal standard of safety or care higher than the minimum the law requires with respect to third party claims. This policy statement is an expansion of that found in the General Order.

All officers, at one time or another, are subjected to the lawful necessity and the subsequent dangers associated with physically controlling an individual without resorting to weapons, and/or searching and handcuffing an individual under lawful arrest. This manual has been produced to assist officers in establishing and maintaining law enforcement professionalism in the use of search, handcuffing, and weaponless control techniques.

The Search and Handcuff Manual, RM 523.02, explains and illustrates Department-approved methods and techniques. These methods and techniques have been designed to give the officer a margin of safety by giving the officer an advantage over the person. The officer should bear in mind that use of a particular search, handcuff, or weaponless control technique is dependent on the totality of the circumstances.

While this manual can serve as the basic guide and sourcebook when reviewing or teaching Department-approved methods and/or courses, officers wishing to develop, maintain, or enhance their skills should also seek competent instruction from Department-approved instructors.

Additionally, so that this manual shall remain as contemporary, viable, and useful as possible, employees shall report, through the chain of command, to the Chief of Police (COP) any discrepancies they discover between the contents of this manual, the law, and acceptable police procedures. Any procedural changes made to those outlined in this manual shall be at the discretion of the COP.

CHAPTER I

CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

A. LAW AND POLICY GUIDELINES

Any peace officer who has reasonable cause to believe that the person to be arrested has committed a public offense may use reasonable force to effect the arrest, to prevent escape, or to overcome resistance.

1. Department-approved search, handcuff, and weaponless control techniques are a form of reasonable force.
2. Individuals shall be handled by officers only as necessary in taking them into custody, to determine that weapons are not being concealed, to maintain control while moving them, and to ensure compliance with lawful commands of officers.
3. Prisoners shall be treated with dignity and in a fair/humane manner at all times.
4. Each set of circumstances, supported by the officer's knowledge of the laws regarding the use of necessary force will be used to justify his/her use of that degree of force.
5. Mandatory documentation procedures for use of force resulting in injury are detailed in General Order 580.02, Section H: Mandatory Reporting Procedure.

B. TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is impossible to establish absolute rules when determining which search, handcuffing, or weaponless control hold should be used.

1. The officer must accept the fundamental premise that arrest is an emotional as well as physical encounter, and that his/her professional demeanor is one of the greatest assets in effecting an arrest.
2. Be sure any verbal orders are simple, clear, loud, and distinct.
 - a. Repeat as necessary but don't assume the individual is belligerent because they fail to respond to your command instantly.
 - b. There may be other problems, such as a hearing disorder or language barrier.



4. Although verbal commands are important, consider the physical and mental limitations affecting the individual.
 - a. Don't tell the individual to do something they may be unable to do, e.g., if they are medically unable to walk faster and you order them to do so.
 - b. Take into consideration the physical environment, as well as physical impairment caused by age, injury, or the influence of drugs.
 - c. Don't assume everyone knows their right from their left.

C. GENDER CONSIDERATIONS

There is no legal distinction between the field search and handcuffing of a man or a woman.

1. Arrests and searches may be effected by police officers of either sex.
2. Gender should not be a factor in the use of approved law enforcement techniques.
3. The use of approved techniques should be tempered by the officer's good judgment.
4. The following criteria can be used when searching an individual of the opposite sex:
 - a. Have another officer witness the search, if possible.
 - b. What was the nature of the crime?
 - c. Was a weapon used in the commission of the crime?
 - d. Is the suspect known to carry a weapon?
 - e. Is the suspect wearing clothing that could conceal a dangerous weapon, or are they protecting a part of their body they don't want you to search?
5. Female officers should search female suspects when field situations permit.

D. SEARCH TECHNIQUE GENERAL GUIDELINES

Search techniques have been designed to give the officer a margin of safety and an advantage over the suspect while searching for weapons or contraband.

1. Based upon the totality of the circumstances and discretionary judgment, the officer should select searches from the following four (4) levels of search control:
 - a. The Cursory Search.

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- b. The Standing Modified Search.
- c. The Kneeling Search.
- d. The Prone Search.
- 2. The following factors can be considered when determining which level of search control will be used:
 - a. The number of individuals involved.
 - b. The size of the individual.
 - c. The physical, mental, and emotional limitations of the individual.
 - d. The location of the arrest or stop.
 - e. The time of the arrest (day or night).
 - f. The individual's arrest record, if known.
 - g. The type of offense(s) involved.
 - h. The individual's degree of cooperation.
 - i. The officer's degree of apprehension based upon knowledge and experience.

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- 4. Officers should not be lulled into a false sense of security by a cooperative suspect.
 - a. An apparent cooperative suspect attitude is no guarantee that he/she will not attempt to escape when presented with the opportunity.
 - b. The officer must maintain constant awareness and vigilance to the actions of the suspect.
- 5. Search systematically so that all areas of the suspect are thoroughly covered. It is to the officer's advantage to ask individuals if they have sharp objects or weapons on their person.
 - a. Don't assume the suspect is being truthful.
 - b. Continue to search alertly and carefully.

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- 7. "Feel", don't pat.
 - a. Your fingertips are very sensitive and help define even very small objects.
 - b. The object is to "feel" for potential weapons or contraband that is hidden by a layer of clothing but is atop the suspect's skin level.
 - c. The initial feel confirms that an object exists and the subsequent feel confirms what the object is.
- 8. Don't confuse the object of the search with the use of the appropriate search technique.
 - a. The object of the search may be weapons, evidence, or contraband.
 - b. The appropriate search technique is that technique that gives the officer optimum protection based upon the totality of circumstances.
- 9. Searching systematically, properly, effectively, and safely is one of the most important steps in the arrest situation.

E. HANDCUFFING TECHNIQUE GENERAL GUIDELINES

Handcuffing is a preventative measure used to protect the officer, citizens, and the arrested individual. The handcuffed individual is the responsibility of the officer unless the responsibility is assumed by another officer or reassigned by a supervisor.

- 1. Handcuffs temporarily restrain the individual. Don't be lulled into a false sense of security because an individual is handcuffed.
 - a. They restrict the individual from doing some things but they do not immobilize them.
 - b. The officer must maintain constant control over a handcuffed subject to minimize actions that may produce injuries or opportunities for escape.
- 2. When handcuffing, it is important to maintain a degree of control over the individual at all times by using an appropriate control hold.
- 3. Control over a handcuffed individual is important in a number of situations that include, but are not limited to
 - a. When escorting the individual to and from a police vehicle.

CHAPTER II

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING HANDCUFFING AND RESTRAINING PRISONERS

A. CONSIDERATIONS FOR RESTRAINING THE MENTALLY ILL

Officers must restrain individuals who, for reasons of mental disorder, are a danger to themselves, to others, or are gravely disabled, and must do so in a manner that reflects concern and safety for all persons involved. Refer to General Order 522.01.

1. Officers shall handcuff a mentally ill person taken into custody when the person is not restrained by means of a strait jacket or leather restraining straps.
2. When handcuffing a mentally ill person, officers shall use only Departmentally-approved handcuffs and ensure that handcuffs are double-locked.
3. When a mentally ill person's age or physical condition is such that the personal safety of the mentally ill person and the officer clearly will not be jeopardized, the use of handcuffs shall be within the discretion of the officer.
4. "Flex cuffs", temporary plastic restraining straps, shall not be used to restrain a mentally ill person, nor shall they be furnished to other personnel or private persons for use in restraining a mentally ill person.

B. THE USE OF FLEX CUFFS

Flex cuffs are plastic restraining straps meant for use under a limited number of situations. For removal, they must be cut off.

1. Situations that may require the use of flex cuffs include
 - a. During mass arrests and a sufficient number of conventional handcuffs are not available.
 - b. When the suspect's wrists are too large and will not fit conventional handcuffs.
 - c. When used in conjunction with conventional handcuffs to restrain a one-armed suspect or one with a cast on the arm.
2. In a situation in which flex cuffs must be used, officers must be aware of the flex cuffs limitations.
 - a. For most officers, the proper application of the flex cuff requires the use of two (2) hands. A single officer may be unable to both properly control the individual and apply the flex cuffs alone.
 - b. If applied too tightly, flex cuffs can cut off blood circulation. The only way to adjust them is to cut them off.
 - c. Flex cuffs can cause injury, such as a skin laceration.
 - d. [REDACTED]
 - e. Officers using flex cuffs must have a cutting tool in their possession in order to remove the cuffs. A wire cutter or diagonal cutter should be used rather than a knife.

C. USE OF LEG HOBBLE/LEG RESTRAINT TECHNIQUES

The purpose of leg hobble/leg restraint is to control the individual who exhibits violent or resistive actions that cannot be managed with lesser levels of conventional restraint. The goal is to prevent injury to all involved parties and to prevent property damage. The "hog-tie" technique of leg restraint shall not be used.

1. The leg hobble technique is the only Department-approved leg restraint method.
2. Leg hobbling restricts or restrains the freedom of the suspect's legs.
3. This type of leg restraint is meant to control violent actions, such as
 - a. Kicking at officers or other citizens.
 - b. Damaging City property by kicking out police vehicle windows or doors or police holding facility walls and/or doors.
4. Only the Department-issued hobble cord shall be used to apply leg hobble techniques.
5. The hobble cord should not be looped or snap linked around the suspect's neck, head, or hands.
6. There are two (2) methods of using the leg hobble: the walking hobble, and the vehicular leg restraint hobble.
7. In the walking hobble, the suspect can walk but cannot kick the escort officer or any other persons, and cannot run.

CHAPTER IV

AFTER FORCE CARE

Regardless of a suspect's violent resistance or demeanor, officers should consciously practice professional techniques that reflect concern and reasonable care in preventing unnecessary injury and in obtaining appropriate medical care.

A. OFFICER AWARENESS

There are two (2) critical areas that the officer must be aware of that affect after force suspect care: the condition of the suspect and the level of force used to control the suspect.

1. Many variables can affect the condition of a suspect after lawful force has been used. These variables can make it difficult to predict the extent of injury that may occur.
 - a. Variables in anatomy and physiological capabilities.
 - b. Physiological response (drug use, pain tolerance. etc.).
 - c. Mental and emotional states.
 - d. The level of force used by the officer to gain submission and control of the suspect.
2. Officers should refer to G.O. 580.02, Section C. This section refers to medical follow up when physical force results in injury.
3. Individuals who exhibit drug-induced psychosis or psychotic behavior and have been controlled by use of force may be at higher medical risk.
 - a. These individuals should be continually observed at the arrest site and during transportation for signs of distress, including breathing, skin coloration, and functional consciousness (i.e. voluntary movement and/or speech).
 - b. If the officer is in doubt, or if the individual appears under medical distress, begin first aid and request immediate paramedic and professional medical care.
4. Officers should treat a suspect's complaint of pain with the same concern, alertness, and follow up as a visible injury.

B. DOCUMENTATION

1. Information included on all mandated forms and reports shall be complete, concise, and consistent.
2. If force was used inconsistent with Department policy or training, the officer is fully responsible for documenting the justification and reasoning for such force.
3. Officers should also consider taking photographs of injury or complaints of injury as an additional documentation record.